



MUD IS EXCELLENT
FOR MY GLORIOUS
COMPLEXION.

Common Mudpuppy

These hefty salamanders grow up to 16 inches long. Because they spend all of their time in Smokies streams, they have bushy external gills that allow them to breathe underwater. During the day they hide in submerged burrows; at night they come out to feed on fish, crayfish, snails, frogs, and other salamanders.



Dung Beetle

If you happen upon two small shiny beetles rolling a ball of dung, be assured it's really nothing out of the ordinary. Dung beetles routinely gather dung from deer and other animals into a ball, roll it around to get it nice and packed down, then bury it and lay eggs in it. This way the young have plenty to eat when they hatch.



IT CAME FROM
THE
SMOKIES!

They're out there—slimy, wiggly, spooky creatures that seem like your worst nightmare. But these seemingly-unfriendly organisms all play a role in the great diversity of the Smokies. Learn about a few here...after you recover from the heebie-jeebies.

Illustrations by Lisa Horstman



Eastern
Slender Glass
Lizard

HEY!
WATCH THE
TAIL!
THE TAIL!

SORRY,
MAN.

These weird animals look like snakes but are actually lizards with no legs. They have extremely long tails that break off very easily (hence the name "glass lizard"). It's rare to see them because they spend most of their time in rodent burrows. When they come out, they hunt spiders, snails, bird eggs, snakes, and more.



Slugs

A SHELL?
WHO NEEDS ALL
THAT BAGGAGE?

Slugs are simply snails without shells. They secrete a generous amount of slime, which helps them ooze along the forest floor. Their favorite foods are leaves, roots, flowers, fruits, and fungi. Look for mushrooms with slime trails and bites eaten from them. Some birds eat slugs, but most think they're just too slimy.



AIEEAAAA!
NO! NO!! NOOOOOOO...